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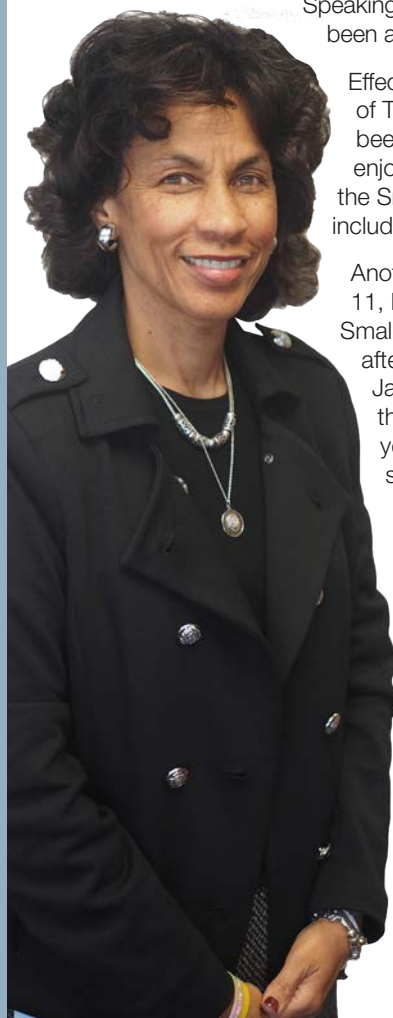
DBE Supportive Services

Tyler Construction Engineers, P.C.
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DBE Supportive Services

We Welcome Change!

With our recent weather conditions this past winter, it's a joy for us to welcome springtime once again! It seems as though it was just the other day we were talking about moving our clocks in one direction and now we have moved them in another. This time they want us to spring forward, while some people are suggesting we don't "spring forward" or "fall back" again but simply remain on one constant time for the entire year! Psychologists would probably say it is human nature to resist change.

Speaking of change, there have been a few changes here in the Civil Rights Office.



Effective February 10, Deborah Luter was promoted to the Director of TDOT's Civil Rights Office. As many of you may know she has been the DBE Program Director for the past 13 years and has enjoyed it tremendously. Now, in addition to her involvement with the Small Business Development Program, her new responsibilities includes oversight of the Affirmative Action and Title VI programs.

Another change is Deborah's former position. Effective March 11, Elizabeth Michael was promoted as the Director of the Small Business Development Program. Elizabeth joined TDOT after having worked various HR administration positions in the Jacksonville and Tallahassee, Florida areas and has worked in the Contract Compliance Officer Three position for almost 4 years. Her interaction with both prime and DBE contractors should prove invaluable as she takes the reigns and charts a new course.

Even though Elizabeth and Deborah have assumed new titles, responsibilities and telephone numbers, they are still first and foremost advocates for small and minority owned businesses. Their goal will always be that TDOT DBEs achieve the greatest amount of access and support in an industry not typically open to historically underutilized segments of the population.

As they do their best in continuing to serve your needs, they hope you will join them as we "Spring Forward" in 2014.

Congratulations Deborah and Elizabeth!



Elizabeth Michael

Director of the Small Business Development Program

Deborah Luter

Director of TDOT's Civil Rights Office



How Will the Affordable Care Act Impact Your Business?

Teresa Daniel, PHR, Human Resource Specialist

As a small business owner, you have probably seen much written on the HealthCare Reform Law/Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the proposed impact on the small business community.

Therefore, for the purpose of this article, we will simply focus on the following: (1) a reminder of a few key points regarding the ACA; (2) the importance of partnering with your legal and tax advisors to ensure compliance with the ACA; and last but not least (3) assisting you with building an ACA Tool Box of resources that will enable you to stay current on the rapidly changing ACA and the health insurance environment. In addition, it is important to understand the purpose of this article is to provide a general overview and a few key reminders of the ACA and is in no way intended to interpret the law, replace the law or substitute the advice from your legal and tax advisors.

First, let's review a few key points and reminders. It is important to note that the size of your business and the number of employees you have will determine how the ACA may impact your business. Also, for thorough compliance, we strongly recommend that you refer to the full version of the Affordable Care Act at the Department of Health and Human Services website: www.hhs.gov.

- Effective October 1, 2013 employers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) are required to notify employees about the Health Insurance Marketplace. A full review of the notification requirements and forms can be found at The Department of Labor: www.dol.gov.
- Effective January 1, 2014 Sole Proprietors/Self Employed individuals are required to have minimal health insurance coverage or may be required to pay a penalty. For all tax regulations visit www.irs.gov and consult your tax advisor regarding how the law will apply to your specific business.
- Employers with fewer than 50 employees are not required to offer employer health insurance coverage to their employees. However, if these employers decide to offer insurance, they may be able to take advantage of a tax credit depending on business size and annual average salary of employees. Tax Credit Eligibility is determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). For all tax regulations regarding the ACA refer to www.irs.gov and consult your tax advisor regarding how the law will apply to your specific business.
- Employers with 50 or more Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees will be required to offer coverage and meet the

ACA Employers Shared Responsibilities (ESR) Provisions of the ACA by mid-2015 or face a fine. Please refer to the complete ESR Provisions, Transition Relief for 2015, and Certification Requirements at www.hhs.gov. Review with your legal and tax advisor to ensure compliance.

- For the purpose of the ESR Provisions of the ACA, the terms **Full-time Employee** and **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Employee** are defined as follows: A Full-Time Employee is an employee who is employed on average 30 hours or more per week or at least 130 hours of service in a given month. A FTE Employee is a combination of part-time employees (each employed less than 30 hours per week), whose combined work hours are counted as the equivalent of a full-time employee. Example: two employees who work 15 hours per week each are added together to equal one full-time employee. Please refer to www.irs.gov and your tax advisor regarding accurate calculation of employee totals to ensure compliance.

- Employers with up to 50 FTE employees may utilize the SHOP (Small Business Healthcare Options Program) Insurance Marketplace to purchase health insurance coverage for their employees. For a full review of SHOP, please visit www.healthcare.gov/marketplace/shop.

Second, as a DBE owner, you bring your own brand and value to the marketplace. You have specific circumstances that relate to your specific business needs. As we mentioned earlier, this article and all included references are not intended to interpret or replace the law but to serve as a reference tool. In no way should this be considered a substitute for legal and/or tax advisor advice. With that said, we have highlighted the following points to assist you;

- Always refer to the complete Affordable Care Act at www.hhs.gov for full compliance.
- Partner with your legal and tax advisors to ensure ongoing compliance regarding Tax Credits, ESR Provisions, and overall minimum requirements of the law.
- Also as a remainder, the IRS has issued specific guidelines regarding tax credits and calculation methods for business owner to determine their responsibility and how to comply with the law.
- Partner with a reputable and effective insurance agent or broker well versed in the ACA to guide and assist you with navigating the insurance marketplace to find the best coverage plan for your employees.
- Discuss your budget, needs of employees, and your overall business goals regarding benefits with your agent or broker.

**How Will the Affordable Care Act Impact Your Business?** *cont.*

Third, and last but not least, throughout the article we have noted several resources, websites, and links. Now let's take a collective look to be sure that you have the resources needed to assist you with building your ACA Resource Tool Box:

Partners

Legal and Tax Advisors, Insurance Agent or Broker

Department of Health and Human Services

Refer for a full and accurate review of the ACA

www.hhs.gov

HealthCare.Gov

Refer to this site to access the Individual Marketplace and SHOP

www.healthcare.gov

Internal Revenue Service

Refer to this site to access the full IRS guidelines regarding FTE calculations, Tax Credits and Penalties, and the latest IRS final Ruling and IRS ACA Fact Sheet

www.irs.gov

Intuit

This is an additional site that is used as a reference tool.

www.intuit.com

Small Business Administration

Ongoing educational resources

www.sba.gov

Department of Labor

ACA provisions, employer notices, forms, and guidelines

www.dol.gov

TN Insurance Commission

State of TN has provided information on the website

www.tn.gov/insurance/healthcare.shtml

Additional Resources

www.smallbusinessmajority.org and www.business.USA.gov

Congratulations on taking another step building your ACA Tool Box. Remember to continue to utilize these and other resources to stay current on the Affordable Care Act to ensure compliance while also making effective business decisions.

Coming up in the next issue of DBE Fastracs: "Can You Leverage the ACA for an Effective Recruitment and Retention Strategy?"

Affordable Care Act Workshop

Teresa Daniel, PHR, Human Resource Specialist

Jay B. Mercer, Enrolled Agent/Tax Strategist



During the first quarter of 2014, TDOT Supportive Services Program provided a workshop to give DBEs insight on the Health Care Reform/ Affordable Care Act (ACA) and how your taxes could be affected. The workshop was led by Teresa Daniel, PHR & Jay B. Mercer, Enrolled Agent/ Tax Strategist.

This workshop was an overview of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) general requirements and the tax impact on small businesses. The workshop was designed to offer insight on how the ACA will affect business owners whether operating as a Sole Proprietor, Corporation, Partnership,

or Limited Liability Company (LLC). In addition, the workshop covered the importance of seeking advice legal and tax professionals to ensure ongoing compliance with the ACA requirements and the IRS tax regulations.

A few of the topics covered in the workshop for small business owners were:

- How business size will determine the ACA impact to your company.
- Encouraging small business owners to identify specific business situations and questions to review with legal and tax advisor to ensure ongoing compliance.
- How small business owners could use ACA to help or attract qualified employees.
- Identified resources, websites, and links to stay current on latest updates of ACA.
www.hhs.gov
www.healthcare.gov
www.irs.gov
www.sba.gov
www.dol.gov

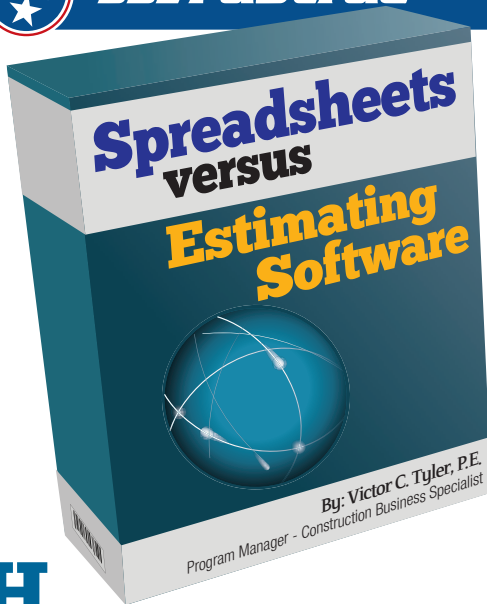
ACA Requirements

- Who is required to provide health insurance?
- Does the employer have to notify their employees about the new insurance exchanges?
- How does the ACA define a "full-time" employee?
- ACA Employer Share Responsibility Provisions.

Tax Planning Strategies

- What benefits can I offer my employees?
- Planning for Tax Law Changes.

The workshop was very informative and generated a variety of great questions from attendees. Due to the rapidly changing HealthCare Reform, participants were reminded to always consult their legal and tax advisors regarding ongoing ACA compliance and tax regulations issued by the IRS.



Finding YOUR Right Solution

Have you ever wondered if you were using the right software to best meet your business needs? Whether for estimating, accounting or budget development, you should always first look at the specific operational and management needs of your business in deciding which software to employ.

Many small companies utilize spreadsheets as their “go to” software in almost every aspect of their business. This is with good reason, as many construction estimators have built some very impressive spreadsheets for estimating, budgeting, and financial analysis in the last several decades. Also, you can create templates for different types of work or analysis that you can use repeatedly for years. Ironically, though, the same ease and flexibility in using a spreadsheet may actually hinder estimators from investigating off-the-shelf or web-based software programs, which could in fact offer them additional solutions.

But before you throw your hard earned cash at the latest and greatest, bell-ringing, whistle-blowing estimating software program, there’s a secret I would like to share with you. Believe it or not, most of you should start with spreadsheets. It is only after you have fine-tuned your spreadsheets to your particular needs that you are then ready to search out and buy your software of choice.

In fact, the results of a recent survey of construction estimators show that roughly 55% use MS Excel™ to estimate project costs. Here are a few reasons why most estimators use spreadsheets:

- Virtually any estimating process can be automated through a spreadsheet.
- Unlimited flexibility – if you can think it, a spreadsheet can often do it.
- Ability to set up a spreadsheet template to your way of estimating or to a company standard.
- Training is readily available and affordable.
- Easy to move from a paper spreadsheet system to an electronic spreadsheet.
- Lower cost.
- Easier to build mathematical and logical formulas.
- Clear picture of how the numbers are generated.

In comparison, there are also some advantages in using a dedicated estimating software program. These include:

- Better reporting with custom report writing capabilities.
- Estimating history is stored in a database.
- Standardizes a company’s estimating process.
- Better at handling and keeping track of a lots of different data.
- Lower risk of erasing or corrupting formulas.

With all of these added benefits and capabilities, you may be asking yourself why you shouldn’t just forego spreadsheets altogether and skip straight to using estimating software. As great as these programs may be, estimating software does have its disadvantages:

- Harder to learn and customize.
- Requires higher level of support from the developer, resulting in higher maintenance costs and time involved.
- Often may not give you the flexibility a spreadsheet provides.
- Can change the way you think about and develop the estimate.
- Often provides more detail and complexity than required.

If resources are not dedicated to implementing and customizing the database, the estimating benefits are often not realized. Many estimating programs sit on the shelf and are never fully and successfully implemented.

In Summary

If you are considering purchasing an estimating software package or even a cloud-based system, strong consideration should be given to the initial development of estimating spreadsheet templates. Through your developing of these templates, you become familiar with the characteristics of your estimating style and your company procedures. Then, if you later find that you have outgrown your spreadsheet needs, you can graduate to a more encompassing and comprehensive software package. Also, these two can often work together. Spreadsheets are great for setting up such things as cost assemblies, while the estimating software will store your estimates easily and broadcast your line item cost updates as your supply and labor prices change.

And remember, if you are a TDOT Certified DBE, our Supportive Services Consultants can provide assistance in walking you through the software evaluation process and/or assist you with customizing your own individualized MS Excel™ templates. For more information, call the DBE Supportive Services Consultants at 615-888-385-9022 or email us at DBE_Supportive_Services@tyler-engineers.com.



GUIDE TO BIDDING TDOT

In March 2014, the TDOT Supportive Services Consultants presented a highly requested seminar, "Guide to Bidding TDOT." Victor Tyler, P.E., and Marshall Tabb led this discussion while the attendees came away with a greater understanding of the TDOT bidding process.

The Seminar was targeted toward small business owners/estimators new to the state-TDOT Bidding environment, as well as to those individuals interested in a refresher of the bidding process. Information was provided concerning highway construction and highway maintenance projects advertised for bids by TDOT. Mr. Tyler led the attendees through the bidding process including information on bid requirements, how to bid on projects and what happens once the bids are opened.

One of the highlights was the course on navigating through TDOT's website to locate bidding information, as this has often been challenging for many people in the DBE and small business community.

A few of the topics reviewed were...

- **How to navigate TDOT's website for bidding information**
- **Become familiar with TDOT Letting Requirements**
- **Gaining an understanding of preparing your bid proposals**
- **Learning tips to marketing to Prime Contractors**

TDOT advertises and solicits bids for construction projects in an effort to open the process to all contractors, sub-contractors, and suppliers. After the bid cutoff date, TDOT will then identify the lowest responsible bidder – the bidder who complies with all prescribed requirements. This process ensures that taxpayers get the best value for their dollars.



By: Victor C. Tyler, P.E.
Program Manager - Construction Business Specialist

If you are interested in additional Seminars in your area, make sure you contact TDOT Support Services Program for the latest Seminar and workshop schedule.



DBE Profiles



Carolyn D. Robinson, CEO **Michael D. Robinson, AIA** **Robi4 Architecture and Planning, Inc.**

Founded in 1999 by Michael D. Robinson, AIA, and Carolyn D. Robinson, CEO, Robi4 Architecture and Planning, Inc. is a provider of full architectural services to private, public, and corporate clients in the state of Tennessee. Their mission is to provide quality architecture, building information modeling, construction contract administration and development services that exceed their client's expectations.

Robi4's clients include municipalities, hospitals, hotels, national historic places, and museums. They also have working experience with major corporations including Smith + Nephew and Federal Express. Private sector clients include both elected officials and professional athletes.

The primary goal of Robi4 is to exceed each client's expectations by delivery of full architectural services. They are able to accomplish this goal by being accountable and punctual, by paying careful attention to detail and by exhibiting excellence in the services that they provide. Strict adherence to this goal has allowed Robi4 to maintain their firm with new and repeat clients for nearly two decades.

Services include...

Architecture	Cost Estimation
Master Planning	Scheduling
Site Planning	Bidding Support
Space Planning	Quality Control
Adaptive Re-use	Owner Representation
Renovations	Field Observations
Additions	Facility Operation and Maintenance
Project Management	Punch List Preparation
Construction Contract Administration	

All consulting services are delivered on a retained basis.

Robi4 staff has over 30 years of combined experience in all phases of architecture and planning. They also possess over 30 years of teaching and training experience in the Corporate, Educational, Governmental, and Private Sectors. Robi4 is also quite competent and proficient in executing large scale development projects in a timely and accurate manner.

Robi4 Architecture and Planning, Inc. believe that "Good design survives the test of time." This principle is incorporated into each unique client and their circumstances. Their design philosophy incorporates elements of simplicity, clarity, and sustainability for people, places, and spaces. Whether it's residential, industrial, or utilitarian, Robi4 strives to exceed each client's expectations and to improve their quality of life.

If you would like to know more about Robi4 Architecture and Planning, Inc., contact them at: (901) 212-7697 or 901.212.7692. You can send them an e-mail at: robi4planning@att.net





DBE Profiles



Ali Y. Sleiman **Machine Technology LLC**

Machine Technology, LLC (MT) is a small business that provides superior construction services and construction maintenance support. President and owner/operator Ali Y. Sleiman brings over 35 years of construction experience into his business. MT specializes in underground drainage and heavy equipment repair. On the construction services side, MT has built a reputation for successfully completing projects that not only meet but exceed the utilities and road specifications. They understand and implement municipality processes and inspections requirements which are critical to a project's completion and test-outs, and are accustomed to being the liaison between the developer and the municipality. MT's experienced staff is knowledgeable in all areas of utilities, not just storm and sanitary, but water installations as well.



Machine Technology is considered The Southeast's Bore Repair Experts

On the heavy equipment repair and construction maintenance support side of the business, Machine Technology, LLC is known as one of the top contractors and equipment repair specialist in the Southeast for providing their clients with the best technical and construction services from the planning stages through completion. Their specialization includes bore, welding and precision line boring of

worn pin and bearing bores, and welding and equipment repair. They also provide onsite repair for construction, industrial and forestry customers in the Southeast Region of the United States.

The goal of MT is to create trusting relationships with their clients, give highly competitive pricing on their services, and build lasting relationship with major prime contractors for opportunities that meet their expertise.

Some of MT's clients include...

ASC VOLVO

Stanley Construction

Hertz Rental Equipment

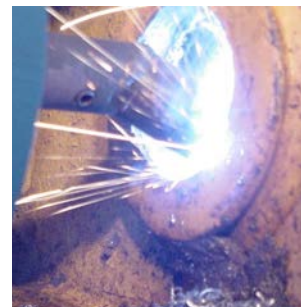
Kenco Rental

Caterpillar rental equipment

Harbaugh Construction

Independent Trucking & Contractors

If you would like to know more about Machine Technology, contact Owner and President Ali Sleiman at: (256) 837-9776 or email: a.sleiman@att.net





Join Friends and Colleagues at the 2014 TDOT DBE Small Business Annual Meeting

LEADERSHIP & GROWTH



AUGUST 18 & 19, 2014

AT THE NASHVILLE AIRPORT MARRIOTT HOTEL

Don't miss the premier Small Business networking event of the year in state of Tennessee! The TDOT DBE Small Business Annual Meeting is expected to attract over 200 hundred members of the transportation and construction industry from both the private and public sectors, spanning across many different disciplines and modes. Private corporations, public agencies and government agencies will also be there in the exhibit area.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

**DBEs • Small Businesses • Prime Contractors
Vendors • Procurement Officers
Small Business Advocates**

Mark Your Calendars Now!

More information to come in our next newsletter.





New DBEs

Welcome

Region 1

Apex Window Cleaning, Inc.

Valerie Richardson

Commercial and High-Rise Window
Cleaning & Pressure Washing

Region 2

N/A

Region 3

B & A Services, LLC

Allen Jefferson, Sr.

Tree Service and Landscaping

Clinical Solutions, LLC

Christi Throneberry

Closed Door Mail Order Pharmacy

Pillars Development, LLC

Edward Henley, III

Real Estate Development, Project
Management, Financial and Budget
Management, Property Management,
Master Planning, Community Outreach,
Public Information Services, Feasibility
Studies and Analysis, Project/Program
Review

Sizemore Consulting, LLC

Susan W. Sizemore

Corporate Communications, Marketing
Consulting and Public Relations

Region 4

N/A

Recently Renewed Firms

Region 1

**East Tennessee Mechanical
Contractors, Inc.**

Mark Deathridge

Concrete Curb, Gutter, Driveways,
Sidewalks, Small Culverts, Earthwork Gen.,
Contracting Steel Erection, Masonry and
Steel or Timber Bridges

ExpoQuip, Inc.

Jorge Sanabria

Industrial Machinery and Equipment
Merchants Wholesalers

**New Millennium Construction
and Services**

Dorothy Ann Bennett

Striping (Parking Lot Only), Rebar, Painting
(Residential & Commercial Buildings),
Sediment and Erosion Control and
Flagging

Samico Professional Service

Sheila R. Hijer

Recruiting Staff Augmentation Engineering
Locator Service, Drafting and Design
Support

Region 2

Environmental Concepts of TN, Inc.

Rita W. Lonas

Hydroseeding, Erosion Control Material,
Sod, Mulching, Silt Fence and Tree Planting

J.M. Hanner Construction Company, Inc.

Jerry Hanner

Concrete and Barrier Walls, Building
Moving, Demolition, Guardrail and Fence

Pec's Construction

Timothy Pruett

Asphalt Paving, Trucking and Light
Concrete Work (Concrete Curbing,
Sidewalks), Silt Fencing, Chain Link
Fencing, Erosion Control, Traffic Control,
Supplier of Liquid Asphalt and Aggregate
Stone

TKM, Inc.

Tammie K. Melton

Landscaping, Sodding, Seeding, Traffic
Control and Erosion Control

Region 3

Ace Contractors, Inc.

Chandan Chaudhuri

Construction (Mainly Concrete & Asphalt)
and Remodeling Work (Framing, Roofing
and Grading)

G & J Construction Company

George & James Jones

Concrete Construction, Flatwork,
Driveways, Sidewalks, Retaining Walls and
Handicap Ramps

Jerry Young & Son Construction, Inc.

Jerry B. Young, Sr.

Truck and Hauling Dirt, Rock and Hot Mix

Modern Day Wrecking

Douglas Williams

Demolition and Excavation

Region 4

Anthony Gorden, Inc.

Anthony Gorden

Tree Removal, Site Preparation, Dozier
Work, Install Septic Tank Systems,
Trenching, Hauling and Erosion Control

Brighter Days and Nites, Inc.

Dorothy Sinclair

Lighting Supplier, Roadway Lighting,
Construction Lighting & Electrical Materials,
Highway Signing Materials and Electrical
Contractors

Matthews Contract Painting, Inc.

JoEvelyn Matthews

Painting

**Tri - State Guardrail & Sign Company,
Inc.**

Melynda F. Sammons

Highway Guardrail and Fence Construction
Contractor and Sign Installation

**Scheduled
Letting Dates****2014**

May 23, July 11, August 29,
October 17, November 14
(mowing & litter)
& December 5

TDOT DBE Supportive Services**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING****TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE****BUSINESS ASSISTANCE**

- Business Planning
- Financial Analysis
- Leadership Development
- Business Coaching

ONE-ON-ONE TRAINING

- Strategic Marketing
- Accounting Software
- Construction Accounting
- Bidding & Estimating
- Project Management
- Contracts & Specifications
- Construction Plan Reading
- Project Controls

Until you can get very clear about the one, overarching purpose for your business, things will always seem a bit muddy."

- John Jantsch, writing at Duct Tape Marketing

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Contract Compliance Officer

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